

KARABI DEV BARMAN

JOURNEY

TO

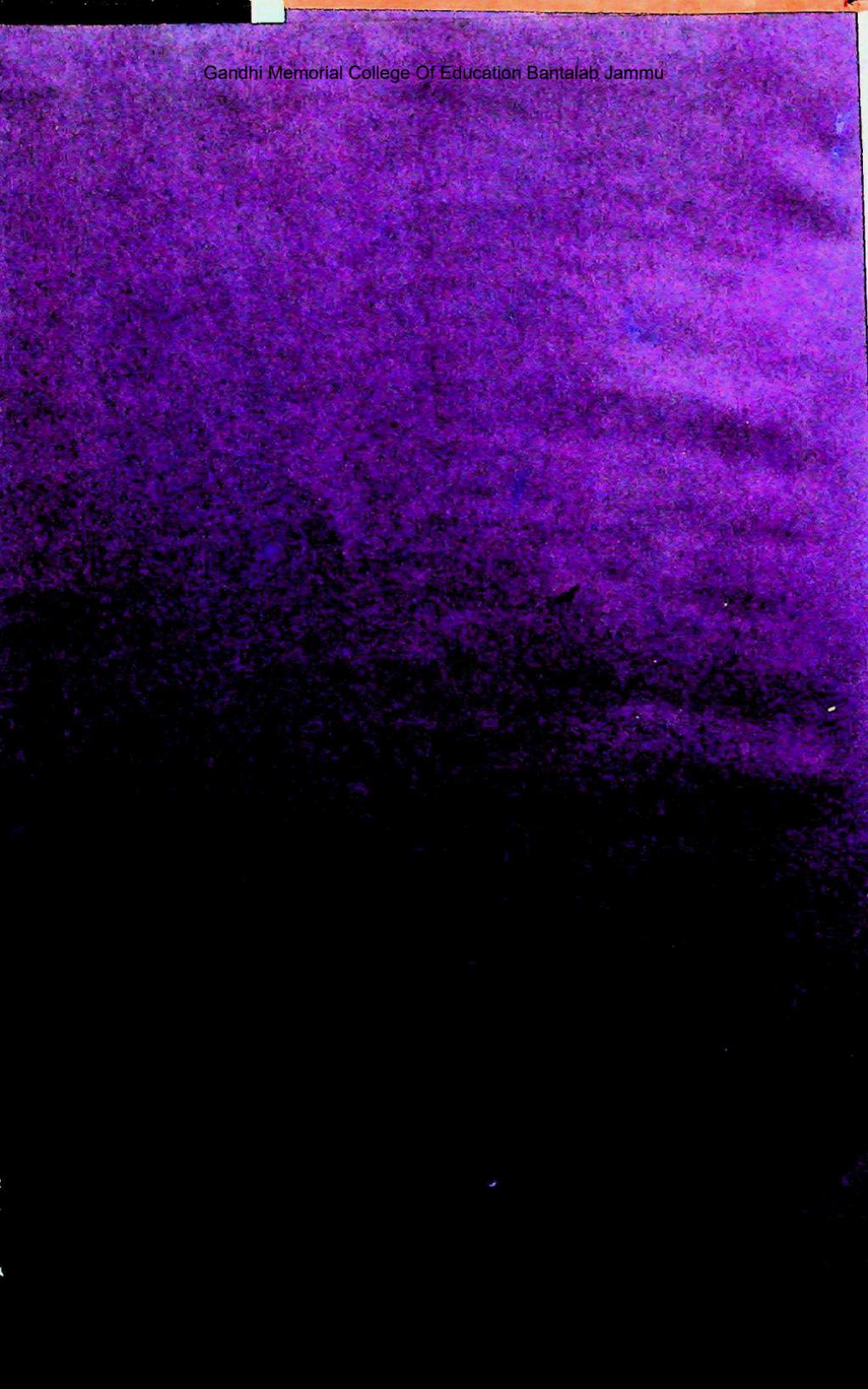
THE

HEART



Born in Agartala on December 30, 1932, Karabi Dev Barman completed her Post-Graduation in Bengali language and literature in the University of Calcutta. She served as the principal of the Agartala Womens' College during period between 1983 and 1992. She was honored with the *Shefali Nandi memorial gold medal* at the *Banga Sahitya Sammelan* in Agartala in 1974. She was felicitated as an eminent poet of north-east at a function earlier organized by the Assam Govt's department of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism in Guwahati in 1987. Among her publications are the collection of poems - *Lonthita Samay Sita*, *Merudanda Dao*, *Kabita Amar Samay Asamay*, *Kichhu Swagatokti Kichhu Byektigata Sanglap*, *Srijone Ursabe etc.* She has been contributing her personal essays, articles, reviews in literary magazines, periodicals and daily newspapers in Tripura and elsewhere in the region.





## JOURNEY TO THE HEART

KARABI DEV BARMAN

With Kind regards  
Presented to - - - - -

~~Dev~~  
Karabi DeBew 28/9/07 at Mysore  
Address Agartala  
Tripura

ଭାଷା  
BHASA  
Agartala, Tripura

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**JOURNEY TO THE HEART**

a collection of poetry

by Karabi Dev Barman

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To my Son  
**Anindya**  
Who gives me love and peace

— Maa.

G.M. College of Education  
Raipur, Bantalab

Jammu.  
Acc. No. .... 623 (D).  
Dated. 23-9-09....

## INDEX

- Black Morning 7      30 Epitaph  
15th August 8      31 Agony of Tripura-hills  
Nearest to the God 9      33 Please answer them  
My Father 10      36 I shall not cower  
Bridging the Seas 11      38 Raising clenched fists they  
Krishnachura, the fire within 13      39 Walk past the waves of procession  
Let the sin fly away 15      40 To you, Doctor  
                            Spectrum 16      42 Agartala Dec. '71  
The child within 17      43 Ang kok sai mana  
There was an address 18      45 Miraculous rain  
Future's magic box 19      46 Shall pick up the poison cup  
                            Let life survive 20      47 The invisible thread  
There is no need to come close 21      48 With a drop of blood  
Set your self free 22      49 You are mine  
                            Collage 23      50 Magician  
                            Love lorn 25      51 Love let not burn anyone completely  
Shall man turn into wood 26      53 Will raise heads in lined up tunes  
Touch and scan the life 27      54 Yet it tells me to fight  
Rich inheritance 29      55 Your soul

## PREFACE

My poems, like birds — transformed, themselves through translation,  
as if, rose rejuvenated from their ashes like phoenix — are ready to fly in the sky for a horizon of bigger reader's circle — who may accept them — may not accept them.  
But they are going to get a wider exposure among my relatives who lived abroad and the poetry loving people who do not know Bengali at all.

But due to some inconvenience on my part and also for want of time, as I was out of station till october 2002, I could not do justice in selection of my poems.  
Many a good poems are left and some ordinary ones have been placed in this collection.

However, I am happy and think myself blessed that at least I could join the commendable venture of *Bhasa*, a reputed publishing organisation of writers in Tripura.  
My thanks and gratitude to *Bhasa*.

Also I must express my high regards and gratitude to the translators of my poems, written in Bengali, — without their support it could not have been possible to make the whole thing into a reality. They are all genious in their field.  
I convey my thanks to them.

KARABI DEV BARMAN



## BLACK MORNING

We live in a world of horror now  
Black night decends on a glittering morning—  
We fail to recognise each other in this blinding light  
Each waiting for the demon to come out  
with its dreaded face,  
from within.  
My cloustrphobic existance, caged in rituals and customs  
Screams for air.  
Duty and weithdrawal fight merge in their faded lines—  
They torment me.  
A cauldron bubbles within,  
fear and bitterness gushes out like  
sudden foam in the angry soda bottle, waiting to escape.  
Existance turns to ashes.  
Had I embraced this dawn,  
I would have escaped the scathing words—  
Words turned into the hyena's sinister laughter,  
The poisonous scorn wouldn't have stung me  
And spread through me.  
I lose my familiier path now, in the scorching sun  
Snakes, tigers, alligators surround me—  
Laughing in their ravaging delight.  
Can fear win someone?  
Every morning can turn into a black morning?  
  
I revisit these blind alleys in utter disbelief  
And question myself.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

15th AUGUST

Oh! Independence!

Are you only an exhibition of flags,  
Some flowers, some conventional patriotic song,  
mere hoisting of flag with the national anthem in chorus?

Then in an indifferent mood,

With hearts not throbbing fast, eyes expressionless.

A return to respective homes,

Once again the shopping bags, the pots and pans,

The same old rice and curry soup and vegetable dish!

But why doesn't a storm of joy

Sweeps the land from the Himalayas to the Seas,

A Niagra falls on a frozen breast?

Let the quiet and gentle calculating life

Be bathed in an overwhelming Sunshine of joy

When the open field itself becomes the home.

How long like a row of corpses

Should we sand Inent after the National song.

Oh, Independence I give birth to a new man

Through joys and unbearable sorrow.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## NEAREST TO THE GOD

It is all over

Thousands of false dreams, hesitations, conflicts  
Which so long girdled the shelf all comes to an end  
I have crossed a long distance

Crossed over thousands of questions— cobwebs  
Now, the time has come for at least,

A moments meditations in deep solitude.  
So long, under the covered sky  
I have also been noticing with the meaningless  
smoke of chimneys

The growth of some aimless stiky life,  
Have seen the sweet sympathetic smiles of the friends  
The shameless smiles of retreating soldiers.

May be mingled there was respect too.

They also must have seen,  
As I have seen it within myself everyday

A cry of meaningless time  
Over the silent sound of solitude

A visible agony of shameful wastages  
Throtling the hope of all possibilities

Now, this is my divine ressurection  
A revival from everybody's suicidal death.

A tiny island, in the mist of time, a boundless ocean,  
The flower in a formaline glass jar

Wants the hardest strock of frost  
Out of the shell, in all total purity.

I am again of my own  
A streched, naked, transparent being  
So transparent that am nearest to the God,

From a fiery bed, swallowing all darkness,  
Masticating all the bitterness with teeth  
Kicking off all hesitations and conflicts

Of thousand false temporary dreams  
Have drowned myself in the music of solitude  
For a serene search within.

## MY FATHER

Always I remember a man

A man in the airport

He was going away.

A man in white *payjama* and *panjabi*

His thick hairs were gray.

Except his gray hair, he was young in body and mind

Straight like a stick

A cigarette within his two yellow fingers

A chain smoker

A jolly good smile in his vivacious lips

He was going away

All relatives assemblid nearby

Wife, children, son-in-laws

He never showed any weakness— no sorrow

A man with cancer in lungs.

He went away, as if for a holiday trip

To never come back, Alas!

He was my father— my father.

Whom I lost forever.

*Translated by the poet.*

## BRIDGING THE SEAS

Have we not dreamt our dreams?  
We were drenched in the same monsoon shower,  
Tainted by the same Sun everyday,  
Walked together in the same moonlit night

And yet

Have we not dreamt any dream?  
Have we not embraced each other in love

Are we not interwoven

In the same rythm of life?

How can just one storm  
wash it all away?

It took both of you and me

To build the heritage,  
Innocent smile of children,  
Warm affection of mothers,  
We cherished the common treasure,  
The lively green paddy field,  
The symbol of our vigorous life force,  
Was never created out of conflicts  
between bill-hook and chopper.

But today it is  
storm that crushed to ground  
Your heart and mine.

Eye-ball mirror reflects  
Deep distrust of lengthening shadows,  
But the storm came to stay forever  
with Davil's call for Doomsday,

Shall we forever witness  
Our green fields turned barren

By people of jackles,—  
The dead walls dividing  
Our souls.

Those who have sown the seeds of distrust  
Do they know the flood-tide has ushered in  
Life will come back  
With all its vigour.

(Written after the 1980 communal riots in Tripura)

*Translated by Dr. N. DebBarman, Tripura.*

## KRISHNACHURA, THE FIRE WITHIN

Madhuri, your good presence is enough  
I cannot cope with such

    Measured teethy smile  
Just keeping a bird alive  
By providing food and water  
    into a painted cage  
Let that beauty remain hanging  
    over my poor head.

Let us sit on the hillock.

    Simplicity— tenderness—  
All the worthless words  
    Which does not serve any purpose  
    in this material world  
Let us talk about these.  
Let the thirst of life  
    be quenched down by these.  
Someone has bought madrassi shari,  
Someone has got quick promotion,  
Someone is climbing the manument  
    under the umbrella of his boss.

(I am utterly tired of all these things)  
Mrs. Das is a women of low mentality.  
"Children of someone are very naughty,  
Mrs. Palit uses very harsh words"  
What purpose will be served  
    with all these pretty things.

...No... I woun't join to my club today  
Madhuri, please sit beside me sometime  
Tell me what are the new happenings

in your college today  
There is a featherly touch of cloud  
in the western corner of the sky  
All the Krishna chorus of *kankar tilla*  
have blossomed in fire  
Madhuri, please put some magic  
of your childishness  
to keep my eyes spell bound.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## LET THE SIN FLY AWAY

Don't fear—  
these are paper tigers; they can't bite;  
If they do, they don't leave scars of lifetime—  
only screams are heard through words and letters.  
You can laugh them away.  
Upheavals and chaos,  
Trapped in papers and words...  
Yet this tiger  
Unchains the cage within my heart  
With its gruesome ferocity,  
Begins a colossal dialogue,  
If you keep it in your pocket,  
You might feel the heart of affliction  
Drop it in a waste-basket—  
Let the sin fly away!

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

## SPECTRUM

The illusive grove of thousand years  
Evolving out of former birth  
Removing the veil of mist  
The simple masonry work of seven pillars  
Straight and firm — constructing one magnificent structure  
The new Eastern Sun laying  
The spectrum of new era  
Reflecting in my eyes very boldly very gently  
Wind has snatched away the loving  
Scent of forgotten dream  
From the earthen pot eternal time  
With a view to circulate it  
From heart to heart  
Artists have painted a picture  
Extending upto the horizon  
Dipping the brush in seven deep colours  
Is there any poetical metre in the colours  
Which swings  
Swings the song of wild flowers  
Hidden in the cave  
Swings the song of hope and desire of the hearts  
Once these were all impracticable fancies  
Of fossilized stone  
Still the seed germinates  
In daring venture of imperishable remembrance  
It comes loud piercing the hill  
With sense of bold shivering.

*Translated by the poet.*

## THE CHILD WITHIN

Yesterday we saw a movie

the villain there turned into a saint.

Love made that brilliant change,

A pair of small hands blunted

open knife, his cunnings,

The little boy without

any arms or ammunition

could make that change.

In every heart

There is a little child,

who is pure, simple and loving.

Incomparable with any other worthy things,

We must bring him out

to stand against all the evils,

He alone with his graceful love

Can bring about the lasting change

that galvanised our spirits.

*Translated by the Poet.*

THERE WAS AN ADDRESS...

Believe me

I didn't come to you

With everything packed or arranged

In this scorching afternoon heat.

I had an address,

Long time back— neatly folded amidst some papers

Did'nt know I would need it—

It reappeared as I groped for it

Caught within my two fingers.

Now in this revelatory field

Sunlight spread everywhere

Trapped in a dilemma,

Whether to call or not—

Doors opened to the inner chambers.

Believe me

I did'nt come to you

With everything packed and arranged

In this blazing afternoon heat.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey,*

## FUTURE'S MAGIC BOX

What poetry do I write?

I think of inscribing my thoughts with the pen

Future's hope—or some language of love,

Or may be some blissful Eden of my dreams

But my pen bleeds,

Only blood.

A bitter, quinine teste lingers in my mouth—

Poisoned.

What do you want to hear?

Will you listen—if I tell you,

I am a guinea pig, of the political party laboratory

Or a research object under intellectual eyes.

I exist now without land, home or roots.

My innocence raised redicule and laughter,

Love's flame flickered and died at the gates of deception.

The earth circumference gets reduced

Without clothing and food,

I was pushed into the abyss of the cave.

But I know I would'nt be allowed to live here either.

The thirst within my explosive, questioning eyes

Would be answered by the cranium—

Placed in future's magic box.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New jersey.*

## LET LIFE SURVIVE

Move away with a slight smile  
Let him say— whatever he wants to.  
Let the words crawl over the white page  
With thoughts in the mind — all toxic,  
Gushing out in innocent rush.  
Let the heart unfold,  
The veiled romance.  
Yet, let there be a path  
Amidst a molten inferno.  
Let life survive  
Never divulge distress or hatred.  
Only, listen.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

THERE IS NO NEED TO COME CLOSE

Can a slight kiss  
Or putting my hands together on your heart  
Strike a momentary lightening?  
Will the sea rush with it's fiery deluge inside the room—  
Pestilence or may be secret bloodshed may occur  
Stars might continuously drop  
from the heart of the firmament  
And if that happens then

There is no need to come close.

The tree of heart hides amidst a deep, dark forest  
It is deep, solemn, and beautiful like you  
I will paint my kiss on it  
Will enfold it in my embrace

And imagine the corporal fragrance

Let this earth, time and mind  
Be filled with a spiritual stasis

Each to its own.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

## SET YOURSELF FREE

What type of Independence is this?

And for whom

Through flesh and blood

In and out

Its only slavery.

A small rivulet

Weary of meandering journey

Gets tumbled

At the feet of corruption

want if you

To get it back to

Transparent course of life

Allow the blood to ooze out

For the blood is infected with poison

Break open the shackle of

Mortgaging head to intellect

Hands to the feet

The rivulet

Stands motionless

at the binding curve of time

Dredge it out

And set yourself free.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

COLLAGE

Clip a portion of the editorial of an established daily,  
Take out a chunk from the fiery speech  
of a member of parliament,  
Why did Kalyan Singh's hand lie inert clear the reasons.  
When monkeys and baboons were dancing atop the mosque.  
How far is Delhi from Lucknow?  
How many hours it needs to reach news to and fro  
Examine the situations— clip some of it.  
Kalahandi, Koraput in drought and barren,  
Rows of starving dying people—  
Go through the recorded statement of the officer-in-charge,  
Clip some of them,  
Drinking water is poisonous in several centres of the Metropolies  
Who are responsible and why?—  
Note the confessions  
What gains it brings through devaluation,  
Clip off some of it.  
Population explosions, spurious liquors causing deaths,  
The village that suppose to get cyclone warning  
well ahead of time,  
Did not get it at all— why,  
Clip the necessary explanations,  
The woman lying on the hospital bed  
Why her existence has been crushed  
And under what circumstances — take note of it,  
Rip open the womb of maiden,  
And probe the yellow fat around it,  
What were her ambitions and ideals,  
Scissors out some of those and paste,  
Clip the language of the eyes of the young man

Why these reflections waste standing in the job form ques—

Why drug addiction, forgery and smuggling are there

Some of the reasons—

The woman with loud make-up found standing in the red light area,

Why and how she stands like this?

Find out the reasons— Clip some of them,

The girl dies after birth, dies as if she goes out of home, after marriage

India spreading over three hundred two lakh eightyseven thousand two hundred sixtythree square kilometers

The vast India of twentyseven states

Is it rational society?

Clip some of them—

Take some from the extracts of Mondol Commission

The religion-based parties— are they reasonable?

Clip all of them and place them in proper perspective

Now see for yourself

Do you get a vision of

Artistic India—

A superb collage.

*Translated by Dr. B.P. Mukherjee and Bikash Choudhuri, Tripura.*

## LOVE LORN

You are a dead soldier  
Reads the telegram,  
Just a helpless corpse  
At the cold lap of death  
Yet the other day you left  
Warm foot prints,  
Still alive in the muddy courtyard.  
Last night a tempest swept away  
My jasmine creams  
As the bullet  
Tore asunder your body  
Closeted to your chest  
Never again  
Shall I have my dreams in my eyes.  
The way you dared  
Uphill and mountains.  
With bold hand sowed  
Seeds for a green cornfield  
Never again  
Shall you ever  
Weave me in your caring hands.

*Translated by Bikach Choudhuri, Tripura.*

## SHALL MAN TURN INTO WOOD

In the final departing love  
Will man swallow the green horizon.  
And turn into wood  
Will he throughout the century  
Belch out the poisoning fluid  
Will the insipid bubbles  
from roused peaches  
Camouflage the sky,  
time and again?  
Who plucks the lotus leaf?  
— many— all most all  
Yet it is man again  
with solid manure  
indulge in flower-culture,  
How easily forgetful he is.  
Devoid of green tree wood  
proceeds to fiery funeral  
Still now piercing the heart  
the splinter remains  
With pure though pierced with  
Why man should turn into wood  
It's his burden today  
to prevent the catastrophe.

*Translated by Bikash Choudhuri, Tripura.*

## TOUCH AND SCAN THE LIFE

Why at all a hermit's satchel,  
Raise your fingers  
Touch life and scan it.

Why watch from a victorion balcony  
through magnifying glass.

Come down in the Sun,  
face the crude struggle

Abundant oxygan if there be

Sow some seeds in the forest,  
Some in the garden,  
Some in two rows,  
By the side of your heart

Mountain will turn into occean.

Unfolding process levelling the gaping wounds  
The pale sky descends down.

To merge with the green fields,  
Awakened from slumber

Recollect the profiles of old friends—

Why this assassin's knife in hand?

Go down the memory lane

Touch the yesteryears

Crystal clear as tear drops

And the comming hours,

Close to chest take a colourful quilt

With abiching softens like starlite night.

Warm in yearns of great conviction.

Ask yourself and others

Where to go with such haste and speed

Know the goal

Become a more convinced traveller

why at all a hermit's satchel?

Raise your fingers

Touch life, scan it.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## RICH INHERITANCE

Not so much wealth did he leave us with  
Nor a costly attire, nor a valuable presentation  
Never he cared about our garments,  
Sometimes it was an unhappy moments  
in our childhood days,  
But he gave us a hope to build our future on  
a courage to face both the good and evil.  
He taught us to be steady, to be kind  
And a worldly person.  
He used to embrace us and kiss on forehead,  
When we were shattered, torn, dejected and vanquished  
His bold hands were there right to help us  
In a perfect manner, when we most needed that,  
He was a big banyan tree on our head  
Always careful to provide the safe shelter.  
He nourished a sea of compassion  
a coloured garden of love.  
a wisdom within him — for us — his children  
When we are sick, torn up, desolate,  
It comes down with his blissful grace,  
We get inspirations from all his rare humane gifts,  
Water drops down from the eyes,  
We feel how blessed we are,  
On this mundane Earth.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## EPITAPH

The very utterances of yours  
That you used to like her more than me—  
Was like a thorn that  
pierced me through my heart very deeply,  
Yes— I bleed profusely  
And will be bleeding forever.  
till the last drop  
But that is within me.  
After that there will be no more agony,  
no question, complete serenity,  
No accounts, no balance sheet of joint life  
A genuine humour will survive  
That's all  
No more melancholy  
Will occupy the mind,  
No more discomfort of uneasiness  
The only thing will survive  
in the history, a legend, that a blind  
enchanted person, she, who was born,  
and brought up by her husband very artistically  
for no other reason  
But to be killed by a bruise.

*Translated by the Poet.*

Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu  
AGONY OF TRIPURA HILLS

Now surge with anguish and agonies  
The hills and dales of Tripura.

Khumpui, Gustari are blackened  
By the dying ambers of jhum  
The tender notes of the love-lorn flutes  
No longer lingers in the yonder hills.

Desolate pastures have muted the flutes,  
To a deadly silence of agonosing pain.  
Desperate pangs of humger yearn  
For the last sprout of bamboo shoots  
In the vanishing grooves.

Hordes of blank faced youths  
Run after the mirage of false promises  
Of the mighty and power that be,  
Driving them to morsels of petty jobs  
Out in the hypocrite cities.

Young maiden no longer find the yarn  
To weave the 'Ria' in rainbow colours,  
Colours resembling the ethereal wings of flies  
Shinning in the bright dazzling Sun.

Now their aching hands busy  
Grinding and toiling from morn to night.  
Gone are the gaiety and cheer, spirited jest  
Around the golden spirit of life, in a playful pitcher  
Gone for ever from the guileless hills.  
Hunger stalks in full glare, life, now shorn of dreams.  
Deprivation, helplessness and want  
Have torn apart in naked aggression.

A life full of laughter, joy and mirth  
Blinding city lights, have pulled the soft curtain off,

Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

The dainty dances of Garia and jhum harvest  
From their serene nests in the hills  
To the inande glare of unfeeling stages,  
Sucumbing, sprightly steps  
To an abject surrender of survival.

*Translated by Kamal Kumari Deb Barman, New Delhi.*

PLEASE ANSWER THEM

The bright young man reacted vehemently  
for the statement was baseless  
It was not decent to write that way  
He replied time and again  
"It was not nice, it was not nice,"  
Now, the lady said to me—  
After a careful thought just to avoid a discord  
In that seminar,  
She could or rather did not  
Try to fight with that boy who lives in a fools paradise  
Because it was quite futile  
To fight with a shadow or myth  
That minority are being taken care of  
So that they are not cornered  
But now the lady asked me,  
"Sir, was it nice to keep the minority in seclusion  
Denying basic amenities of life—  
Even after long fortyseven lyears of Independence?  
Was it nice to set up an oil refinery in a place  
Far away from the souce of that oil  
Depriving livelyhood of thousands,  
Was it nice to keep us floating on gas  
And still not give us industries worth the name  
Was it nice to the local young people  
More than helpless victims  
In their own soil?  
May be they were unskilled, illiterate and tactless  
Miserably simple creature on this earth  
But proud they of course are  
of their colourful art rythmic music

Sihpaleands at theplelive under the open sky  
the life goes on gay and happy.  
Was it nice to make them landless,  
beggars and museum pieces  
Are they not more exhibit on great occassions Independence  
or Republic Day,  
I have been married over forty years  
I could not find any connecting road to reach  
my in law's house that day  
I had to walk miles and miles over paddy fields  
Cross the river and a tiny streamlet to reach there  
And see after fortyseven years  
Only half the road was constructed  
And that too not an all weather one;  
No bridge to link as yet  
The paddy fields that streamlet  
Keeping balance over a shaky bamboo pathway  
To reach to that tribal village  
Still now I do not come across any functioning  
dispensary,a school  
A family planning centre or *Balwadi*  
In the sultry unbearable summer days  
When air coolers and conditioners  
breathing soothing relief in towns and metropolis  
Our Indigenous people die like flies.  
Contaminated drinking water  
Lack of medical aid  
Lead them to unhonoured death  
Thousands of them live under the open sky  
May be due to extremists  
Or may be for the optimist  
I don't know whom to blame  
It does not matter to me at all

What matters to me is there any igrominous death,

Killers, it may be Ram or Ravan

Tell me, is it nice thing for a community

Which you people call minority?

What is the utility of observing this

U N Decade for this Indegenous people

Still you want me to compose my prayer

with beautiful words

Like flowerś— a fairy tale on earth?

Sorry, I am undone

I have no answer to

These painful questions

The Norwester chopping

the serene peaceful sea.

*Translated by Bikach Choudhury, Tripura.*

## I SHALL NOT COWER

Cry my poor heart!  
I cannot walk like a free man,  
My bold gaze looking at  
The invincible might!

Lord, give me the strength  
to bear adversity.  
As I cherish my happiness.  
Let me face,  
Adversity, humiliation and shame  
when it falls my way.  
My destiny, I shall shape.  
Get me a hammer and chisel,  
Out of stubborn granite,  
Wipping the sweat on my brows,  
Would they whine,  
Shaking off their centuries slumber.  
I shall unbend  
A new breed of promethues.  
My defiant scream,  
Will usher in their steps.  
'Who unchained us?'

I shall unleash  
Vibrant vivacious lives  
Awakened by my reckless roar  
"Are you the Rama, to free us"  
They would groan in choruses,  
"Ending Ahalya's penance?"  
shaking off their age old slumber.  
Lord, let me

Bring forth to this world,  
A few emancipated souls;  
who can keep their backbones straight,  
Undaunted by the travails of  
Traumatic treacherous times,  
In honour and in shame  
Pray, give me  
A strong straight backbone.

*Translated by Kamal Kumari, Tripura.*

## RAISING CLENCHED FISTS THEY

Clenched fists raised in false anger

Busy were they making a revolution

On initial examinations, calling them nearer,

In their ribs even a handful of germs of love

No where did I find.

Lighting the torches and sweating heavily they

Were busy to rush to the protest rallies.

Drawing closer, to their hearts, I find

Miserliness sticking like the bugs.

Kicked away they men and dogs like dead objects.

But for calling in a rikshaw for the hospital

The little girl did find none of them,

Raising clenched fist busy they were making a revolution

On initial examinations, calling them nearer,

In their ribs even a handful of germs of love

No where did I find.

*Translated by Mihir Deb, Tripura.*

## WALK PAST THE WAVES OF PROCESSION

Haven't seen the face of freedom in any procession.  
Those who come today in trucks at the rate of  
rupees five per head  
Committed bondage was spread all over them like soots.  
Freedom at midnight came long ago.  
After the war some dreams still survived in the eyes of men.  
That part is now all over in fifty years.  
Now there are only some half dead old slogans  
Now it's all walk, walk past the waves of procession.  
Only the procession walks, walks none who care for man.

See where man has reached  
Disintegration, disbelief  
Dead hopes and tired hearts.  
Poors are more poor, riches more rich.  
No one remembers any word for more than five years.  
Thus I see the face of five years only.  
As much the procession walks, as much walk the waves of it  
More than five year survives none  
of progress and friendship.

*Translated by Mihir Deb, Tripura.*

## TO YOU, DOCTOR

Knife scissors stethoscope and pungent smell of medicines

Morning evening night like mortgaged in money lenders  
house

It is yours yet it is not.

Being a doctor you meditated like Bhagiratha

To bring the Ganges down on earth

And brought alive the sixty thousand Sagar descendent  
who were either dead or asleep

Trough the ashes will spring up new life

with boundless joy of creativity

You will be relocated by the side

Of a distant icy pole

Scorching heat or may be among

Suffering people yelling in pain

Your presence would be announced

In the sleepless anxious night

With delicate comforting touch, rock like patience

And silent invincible faith.

There are pangs and hopelessness in life.

Blood oozing out from wounds of pain

Sometimes creat patches incurable deep at heart

But you still will be immeasurably great

Indomitable pure and masculine

Yours is a gamble with ailing hollow life

Don't get allured by the smooth life of car and cosy comfort

Don't come this side expecting a roseys walk

North South East and West take any direction

With casketful of pain

Like crucified Jesus

If you are tune of your love

affection and religion

Then this is the road for you .

*Translated by N. DebBarma, Tripura.*

AGARTALA DEC.'71

Rows of canon ejecting  
Roaring hot streams of lava from their bosoms,  
Deafening the ears;  
Silence outside, eery unbelievable.  
Only a few street dogs.  
Or flying free birds.  
The town is dead, apparently  
The life comes to standstill  
But it blossoms quietly like rows of lotuses  
In the glory of joy  
with resounding hope  
manifested in resolute manliness  
Every loud utterance like shouts of victory  
The docile volcano of patience for many years  
Has become active and alive  
covering the entire land of sinful injustices  
It runs towards coward and cruel tyrants  
to over power them  
With a determination to creat new habitats  
Bubbling with new life  
It's time for rising a new Sun  
Hymes of the sanctified moment  
Are uttered aloud  
Audience with rare fortune listening  
in eagerness overflowing  
The audience have come out in the open field—  
To greet the new Independent Sun  
In the heart of the blue sky.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## AUNG KOK SAI MANO

For years the man was dumb  
None could follow his groaning murmurs  
Uttered with bisected tongue  
His nose swelled in anger  
Veins of forehead throbbing in fury  
Salty tears use to roll down, sometimes.  
He could not speak what he wanted to  
He managed his farm  
He did his marketing  
Raised his offsprings  
They too were born dumb  
Unable to convince others  
A humiliated and insulted man  
He went inside his dark home hiding his face  
Then further deep into further darkness  
Thus was created a dumb colony  
Over the passage of time  
They only lacked the voice  
All other organs, heads, limbs, nose and neck  
in perfect order  
Enabling them for hard toils  
Yet when the bright Sun shown  
Piercing the misty cloud  
Everybody exclaimed — "What a bright day it is"  
He too wanted to vent similar feelings  
But none could read his lips  
Everyone enjoyed the Sunshine;  
When the sky got filled with black clouds  
The wind blowing aimlessly like a wild buffalow  
A boundless joy filled his heart

He too longed for sharing his thoughts  
But alas none could follow his struggled expression  
Cloudy tears would roll down his cheeks  
The people used to stare at him again and again  
The drudgery of life continued unabated and he lived on  
But one day did the Sun rise over his broken forehead  
With the magic wand the magician  
touch the tip of his bisected tongue  
And said "Lo, I've stitched your tongue  
Now talk to your heart's content, all of you"  
His joy knew no bound  
His speech flowing like stream  
through his incised throat  
He shouted as much as he could and said,  
"Ama, Ama, I can speak"  
Ma, Ma, I am able to speak  
Instantly changed the colour of his surroundings  
He and his children murmured like  
The meandering river along the paddy field  
Words emanating from their chorus  
Travelled from horizon  
In endless reverberation.

*Translated by Dr. N. DebBarman, Tripura.*

## MIRACULOUS RAIN

A day—if I had you for a day  
in some seclusion

The torment—that sucked oceans, locked up  
in mythical hearts,

I would pour his burden

On your two hands, feet, over your entire body.  
Like Jesus Christ

Thorns of othe'r agony would prick your body

Miraculous rains of love would shower all night  
in the heart's jungle.

A day—if I had you for a day  
in some seclusion.

Disbelief would gulp down the poisoned pain

Dying, weak existence

Offering its part—

You would liberate me from the venom

It would rain all night, incredulous rains of compassion  
In the heart of jungle.

A day—if I had you for a day  
in some seclusion.

*Translated by Amrita Ghosh, New Jersey.*

## SHALL PICK UP THE POISON CUP

Look, you have drowned yourself in a knee deep water  
For you— I will go into deeper  
If you like  
To decorate your life  
With any oysters  
I will take all pains  
And remove all hurdles  
With my heart and brain  
Ignoring all losses, all defeats  
To decorate your life with flowers  
To wipe out an inch of loss  
I shall pick up a poison phial  
Listen, I shall go down into  
Deeper water for your sake.

*Translated by the poet.*

## THE INVISIBLE THREAD

I want nothing  
Neither love nor hatred  
Nor any infinite hope  
You can curse me for untold disaster  
If you wish  
And hatred which I will accept  
I can accept anything  
Cent percent if not more  
Or half of it or one fourth  
Whatever you want.  
Or don't take anything if you so like  
Let there be something  
Like an invisible thread  
That laced around both hands  
Let it be hatred if it is so  
Or curse,— if it is a curse.

*Translated by Dr. N. DebBarman, Tripura..*

## WITH A DROP OF BLOOD

I went to everybody  
With a begging bowl  
The watery compassion— of the relations  
Shattered me with sorrows and insultation

I lost my identity  
Without having any dues  
Who is that relation of my soul  
That has given me strength  
With a drop of blood  
And brighten my begging bowl.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## YOU ARE MINE

One gets God  
If one wants Him  
You are nothing  
But flesh sweat and tears only.  
You are no more than this  
What makes you so proud  
If I tell aloud  
You are mine only  
Can you deny  
If you can  
Nod your head with denial  
Or make a commitment  
In your heart silently  
But by shouting  
I have discovered you in many debt.  
You are mine only.

*Translated by the Poet.*

## MAGICIAN

You are a magician  
Your fingers — the elixir of life  
You can give vision to a blind  
And life to a lifeless.

As you are a magician  
Hunger is in your eyes  
The youth that weeps  
in blue Pyramid  
Since thousand years  
You can give it a body alive.

You are a magician  
you have a wonderful magical additive  
That rejoin the captive heart with your touch.  
And give her also love.

You are that magician  
Your magical wish can blossom  
flower all over with a magic wand  
You can do anything  
With your magical power.

*Translated by the Poet.*

LOVE LET NOT BURN ANYONE COMPLETELY

So easily, he will be burnt anyday  
It was never his determination  
Nor it was his desperate wish.  
Still, see, how easily that young man  
Moving with so many explosives  
Half burnt, strayed, roaming and roaming now.

It is nothing new  
This young man was ever on hundreds whirling motions  
This death incarnate  
The source of all destructions  
Who had not seen him.  
This particular young man  
We had seen him to come changing his dresses  
Again and again.  
Just a living botheration.  
That same particular timid  
Now becoming more and more dangerous  
He came on his pusillanimity steps  
Totally a ludicrous clown  
Everybody laughed at that time  
Nobody knew whether that was right or wrong  
He in such contradictory words  
Uttered in so wrong pronounciation  
Wanted only straw, rice, cows, buffalows,  
Paddy fields, water, land  
He called C.O as Shiva and B.D.O. as *Bidhu*  
And made himself laughable to the people.  
He came in groups  
And in single

Returned cursing the middle man.  
That youth conspired and changed parts  
Those who taunted their voices  
Or snatched away lands  
Or ditched them  
Or did not grant them loans  
Okay, he wants now replies from them  
He swears with garland of bullets  
In the names of dead strayed relatives  
Who expired consuming uneatables.  
See, now he has changed uniforms and become secessionist  
Generation after generation this young man  
Always mangled, never an intact one.  
Burned with ones of thousands and one  
He now wants to burn all and sundry  
Think for the last time  
Do you want to go to such distressed young man?  
If you think it is good to go to him  
Then there is still time to.  
You may or may not burn,  
Do you think nothing will burn  
Go to this half-burnt young man  
Show this strayed youth a right path  
Nobody showed him a correct one  
There is still time  
Go and show him the correct way  
Because love never let anyone burnt completely.

*Translated by the poet.*

## WILL RAISE HEADS IN LINED UP TUNES

No more will the long crawls continue;  
The protest will stand up.  
The voice of protest from one land to another  
Leaving the shells of nomadic towns  
and pitch metting nights  
will distribute the Sun from one masked door to another.

In each of the echos.  
Will no more lie scattered over thousand miles  
The rotting corpes of the homeland.  
In hunger and with angers in their chests  
The herd of sheep will not be floating any longer  
Due to the veiled craftsmanship of politics.  
Throwing away the weeknesses like affected weeds  
The poets also, with their animal bodies  
Piercing through the air of conspiracy and restlessness,  
Will raise their heads towards the sky like revolting trees  
In lined up tunes.  
Find out where they are sharpening the  
arrows of word by meditation.

*Translated by Mihir Deb, Tripura.*

## YET IT TELLS ME TO FIGHT

In the dawn I wake up,  
I peruse the paper and find  
The news of twin murder, somewhere  
The splinters have caused wound some,  
Terror, loot, price-hike, appointment  
And layoff, or the unemployed youth gheroued the boss.

People throng in the hospital, in the employment exchange,  
yet, in spite of all pains and sufferings  
The blue drifts in your eyes, why I find  
The sweetness of the shadow of white lotus there,  
Your silent and soft smile envelops all hues,  
The light of the stars spread, there in mystick wonder  
I cannot understand how it happens.

I am burnt out, a citizen, sharply around  
With thousand questions, as if,  
Bewildered terrorised and fatigued  
Yet I stroll around the tough footpath,  
I am the monarch when I dream for you  
Why, I like a divine fish in an aquarium  
You swime in golden water,  
My sweet heart, I cannot understand how the biting cold  
Of winter brings the breeze of the spring,  
How you can, at the close of unbearable darkness  
The Luminary light blinks in your eyes — the promise  
Your eyes give me the fillips to fight  
The elixir to live on.

## TRIPURA, MY SOUL

Times, moves ahead through the uphill wind  
Through the valley, touching the breast of hillock,  
Hundreds and one fountains of Dumbur denieing  
In the form of milk moves ahead  
Through the passage of time  
In the brink of Gomati.

I sit and wait with tormented souls  
Of the hills, the field without any harvest  
And the cold memory craddles in the web of dream.  
The spring time whirlpools somewhere around  
The smoke of Jhum kissing the horizon now  
Comes down to the dusk  
Who calls me there  
Was there somebody, calling me?

The dusk curtain down  
The wind is pregnant with rumours  
Smell coming out of the wild creepers, yet, somebody  
Make me to feel the sweet breez amidst  
The soured smell in the unnotified trance of the conciousness.

For whom I am waiting  
In the distant hill, who calls for the craved soul  
In chilling sound of primitive time,  
Who fears or wonders like waves  
The twinkling river melts down  
My two shoulders touch the feet, the helmet  
And hut in the hill closed down  
The darkness in the soul wets, the rivulet winding way

The ups and down through oblique stream,  
The fire in bamboo stick moves here and there  
The waves of light through the darkness  
Who was calling me then, was there anybody?  
I have been waiting in the time as I wished. So  
I have told my minds to be friendly,  
To paint Lotus symbol on the thumb,  
I have told my feet to walk down  
To the moving Sea, hearing the song,  
Move ahead, everyone has gone forward  
I am left in slumber, alone  
In the dream of your loving hair  
In the craps of earth  
Only the cotton spread out of the seed,  
everywhere, on the sky

Am I deep-delved in slumber  
Has everyone left me alone  
Was there nobody to call  
And wake me up.

*Translated by Rameswar Bhattacharya, Tripura.*







BHASA